

REMARKS

Claims 1-8, 11-20, 23, 25-28, 30-32, 34-36 and 38 are now pending in the application. Claims 1-8, 11, 13-20, 23, 25-27, 30, 32, 34, 35, and 38 stand rejected. Claims 9, 10, 21, 22, 24, 29, 33 and 37 have been cancelled. Claims 12, 28, 31 and 36 are objected to. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

1. Claims 1-4, 6, 13-16, 18, 25-27 and 32, 34 and 35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Benes (U.S. Pat. No. 5,161,874). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

A. Regarding Claims 25-27 and 32, the Office comments that Claim 28 stands objected to, but would be allowable if written in independent form to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, as set forth above, Claim 28 has been amended to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 28 is now presented in allowable condition.

Claims 25-27 and 32 have been amended to depend from amended Claim 28. Therefore, when the recitations of Claims 25-27 and 32 are considered in combination with the recitations of amended Claim 28, Applicant submits that Claims 25-27 and 32 are likewise in allowable condition.

B. Regarding Claims 34 and 35, the Office comments that Claim 36 stands objected to, but would be allowable if written in independent form to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, as set forth above, Claim 36 has been amended to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 36 is now presented in allowable condition.

Claims 34 and 35 have been amended to depend from amended Claim 36. Therefore, when the recitations of Claims 34 and 35 are considered in combination with

the recitations of amended Claim 36, Applicant submits that Claims 34 and 35 are likewise in allowable condition.

C. Regarding Claims 1-4 and 6, Claim 1 had been amended, as set forth above, to include limitations similar to the limitations recited in amended Claim 28. The Office has commented that Claim 28 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. As set forth above, Applicant has so amended Claim 28 and submitted Claim 28 to now be presented in allowable condition. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that amended Claim 1 is also now presented in allowable condition and patentable over Benes.

Claims 2-4 and 6 have been depend from amended Claim 1. Therefore, when the recitations of Claims 2-4 and 6 are considered in combination with the recitations of amended Claim 1, Applicant submits that Claims 2-4 and 6 are likewise presented in allowable condition and patentable over Benes.

D. Regarding Claims 13-16 and 18, Claim 13 had been amended, as set forth above, to include limitations similar to the limitations recited in amended Claim 28. The Office has commented that Claim 28 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. As set forth above, Applicant has so amended Claim 28 and submitted Claim 28 to now be presented in allowable condition. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that amended Claim 13 is also now presented in allowable condition and patentable over Benes.

Claims 14-16 and 18 have been depend from amended Claim 13. Therefore, when the recitations of Claims 14-16 and 18 are considered in combination with the recitations of amended Claim 13, Applicant submits that Claims 14-16 and 18 are likewise presented in allowable condition and patentable over Benes.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the §102 rejections of Claims 1-4, 6, 13-16, 18, 25-27 and 32, 34 and 35 be withdrawn.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

1. Claim 8 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Benes (U.S. Pat. No. 5,161,874) in view of Rizkin et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,629,996). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

A. Claim 8 depends from amended Claim 1, which Applicant has submitted to now be presented in allowable condition. Therefore, when the recitations of Claim 8 are considered in combination with the recitations of amended Claim 1, Applicant submits that Claim 8 is likewise presented in allowable condition and patentable over Benes in view of Rizkin et al.

B. Claim 20 depends from amended Claim 13, which Applicant has submitted to now be presented in allowable condition. Therefore, when the recitations of Claim 20 are considered in combination with the recitations of amended Claim 13, Applicant submits that Claim 20 is likewise presented in allowable condition and patentable over Benes in view of Rizkin et al.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the §103 rejections of Claims 8 and 20 be withdrawn.

2. Claims 5, 7, 17 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Benes (U.S. Pat. No. 5,161,874) in view of Parker (U.S. Pat. No. 6,185,356). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

A. Regarding Claims 5 and 7, Claims 5 and 7 depend from amended Claim 1, which Applicant has submitted to now be presented in allowable condition. Therefore, when the recitations of Claims 5 and 7 are considered in combination with the recitations of amended Claim 1, Applicant submits that Claims 5 and 7 are likewise presented in allowable condition and patentable over Benes in view of Parker.

B. Regarding Claims 17 and 19, Claims 17 and 19 depend from amended Claim 13, which Applicant has submitted to now be presented in allowable condition. Therefore, when the recitations of Claims 17 and 19 are considered in combination with the recitations of amended Claim 13, Applicant submits that Claims 17 and 19 are likewise presented in allowable condition and patentable over Benes in view of Parker.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the §103 rejections of Claims 5, 7, 17 and 19 be withdrawn.

3. Claims 9 and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Benes (U.S. Pat. No. 5,161,874) in view of Hoffmann (U.S. Pat. No. 6,62,729). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

A. Regarding Claim 9, Claim 9 depends from amended Claim 1, which Applicant has submitted to now be presented in allowable condition. Therefore, when the recitations of Claim 9 are considered in combination with the recitations of amended Claim 1, Applicant submits that Claim 9 is likewise presented in allowable condition and patentable over Benes in view of Hoffmann.

B. Regarding Claim 21, Claim 21 depends from amended Claim 13, which Applicant has submitted to now be presented in allowable condition. Therefore, when the recitations of Claim 21 are considered in combination with the recitations of amended Claim 13, Applicant submits that Claim 21 is likewise presented in allowable condition and patentable over Benes in view of Hoffmann.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the §103 rejections of Claims 9 and 21 be withdrawn.

4. Claims 11, 23, 30 and 38 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Benes (U.S. Pat. No. 5,161,874) in view of Nath (U.S. Pat. No. 5,412,750). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

A. Regarding Claim 11, Claim 11 depends from amended Claim 1, which Applicant has submitted to now be presented in allowable condition. Therefore, when the recitations of Claim 11 are considered in combination with the recitations of amended Claim 1, Applicant submits that Claim 11 is likewise presented in allowable condition and patentable over Benes in view of Nath.

B. Regarding Claim 23, Claim 23 depends from amended Claim 13, which Applicant has submitted to now be presented in allowable condition. Therefore, when the recitations of Claim 23 are considered in combination with the recitations of

amended Claim 13, Applicant submits that Claim 21 is likewise presented in allowable condition and patentable over Benes in view of Nath.

C. Regarding Claim 30, Claim 30 has been amended to depend from amended Claim 28, which Applicant has submitted to now be presented in allowable condition. Therefore, when the recitations of Claim 30 are considered in combination with the recitations of amended Claim 28, Applicant submits that Claim 30 is likewise presented in allowable condition and patentable over Benes in view of Nath.

D. Regarding Claim 38, Claim 38 has been amended to depend from amended Claim 36, which Applicant has submitted to now be presented in allowable condition. Therefore, when the recitations of Claim 38 are considered in combination with the recitations of amended Claim 36, Applicant submits that Claim 38 is likewise presented in allowable condition and patentable over Benes in view of Nath.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the §103 rejections of Claims 11, 23, 30 and 38 be withdrawn.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Office's comments that Claims 12, 28, 31 and 36 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. As set forth above, Applicant has rewritten Claims 28 and 36 independent form to include the limitation of the respective base claims and all respective intervening claims. Thus, as set forth above, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 28 and 36 and all claims depending therefrom are now presented in allowable condition.

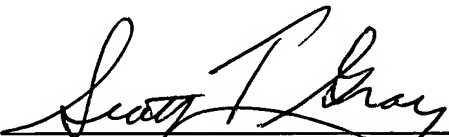
Claims 12 and 31 depend from independent claims, i.e. Claims 1 and 28, that have been respectfully submitted above to now be presented in allowable condition and patentable over the cited references. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 12 and 31 are now presented in allowable condition as depending from allowable independent claims.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (314) 726-7525.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 7/8/05

By: 
Scott T. Gray, Reg. No. 48,891

HARNESS, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C.
7700 Bohomme, Suite 400
St. Louis, MO 63105
314-726-7500